

SAF/LLZ (Legislative Research Team)

ORTIZ, Solomon P. (Democrat)
Representative, 27th District, Texas
Elected 1982 to 98th Congress
Reelected to succeeding Congresses



BACKGROUND

Born: Robstown, Texas - 3 June 1937

Home: Corpus Christi, Texas

Marital Status: Divorced - 2 children

Religion: Methodist

Education: GED, 1961; attended Del Mar College, 1965-67; National Sheriff's Trng Inst, '77

Military: US Army, 1960-62

Profession: Law enforcement official

Political: Nueces County constable, 1965-68, County Commission, 1969-76, and sheriff, 1977-82.

Defeated Jason Luby (R) in the 1982 general election with 64% of the vote. Reelected in 2000 with 63% of the vote and in 2002 with 61%.

Rep Ortiz, a moderate, is involved in immigration issues with Mexico and Latin America. In the 106th Congress, opposed additional rounds of base closures and realignments in 2001 and 2003. Opposed cuts to the Selective Service program and warned that readiness could be jeopardized if military recruiting woes were not reversed. Opposed language in the FY00 DoD Auth prohibiting the use of funds in FY00 for the purpose of conducting combat or peacekeeping operations in Yugoslavia. Believed it sent a wrong message to Slobodan Milosevic and to US forces engaged in combat operations. Also signed additional views regarding the emphasis DoD has placed on outsourcing and privatization and suggesting that all DoD may be left with is reduced readiness, a degraded military capability, and an exiled civil service workforce that collectively contributes to the weakening of America's national security policy. Traveled to Colombia to discuss ways to help fight drug trafficking and to aid Colombia's peace process. Grilled Air Force officials about why money allocated in various supplementals for spare parts is not reaching the field quickly enough. Observed that there has been a "leveling off of the cannibalization rates." Suggested using manufacturing capabilities of public depots to spur competition from the private sector. Observed that there are very few Hispanics in officers' ranks in the military. Hoped by adding Junior ROTC programs in four South Texas schools, there wouldn't be any excuse why there aren't more senior Hispanic officers in the military. Opposed Army move to consolidate combat support and other logistics activities under the acquisition function.

In the 107th Congress joined several other members to chastise AF officials for an inability to manage depot repair maintenance programs within congressionally-mandated levels, and was critical of DoD for failing to invest adequately in aging military depots. In July 2001 was presented the USO's "Quality of Life Award" for his work on behalf of military personnel. In October 2002 initiated a GAO review of Army privatization plans for depots and arsenals.

Additional: Member, Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Airpower Caucus, and co-chair of the Congressional Depot Caucus. Corpus Christi and Kingsville NASs in his district, as well as Corpus Christi Army Depot (Logistics Depot)

AF Bases: None

COMMITTEES

ARMED SERVICES -- Subcs on: Readiness (Ranking); Tactical Air and Land Forces

RESOURCES